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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 10, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 10, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

BOLGE / EKSPRES / SABAH (GUNEY) / ZAMAN: Tekel Cigarette Factory in Adana will resume its operations early next week; this has turned out to be a reported victory following a 41-day strike of the workers at the factory. 700 workers joyfully celebrated government's decision to re-start production.

SABAH (GUNEY) / ZAMAN: Prime Minister Erdogan will come to Mersin today to attend a series of openings and meetings in the province. Erdogan will arrive at the Sakirpasa Airport and stay briefly in Adana. Erdogan will stay 1.5 days in Mersin and then will go to Kahramanmaraş.

CUMHURİYET / OZGUR GUNDEM: 327 members of intelligentsia, including well-known Turkish authors Yasar Kemal and Orhan Pamuk, issued a joint declaration in Istanbul and demanded an answer from the Ministry of Justice and judicial authorities on why they have not yet taken action and started the investigation into the murder of Musa Anter, a Kurdish writer, who was killed in 1992 in Diyarbakir. Abdulkadir Aygan, a PKK defector who is currently residing in Sweden, has already made public confessions and explained details of Anter's murder, which was allegedly planned by Aygan and perpetrated by JITEM members back in 1992.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Kurds in several southeastern provinces of Turkey have started protest actions as the February 15 anniversary marking Turkish authorities' bringing of Abdullah Ocalan to Turkey after catching him in Kenya in 1999, drew near. Youth in Batman blocked a railroad and stopped a passenger train that set off from Diyarbakir for 45 minutes. Free People's Initiative in Batman and a group of youth in Siirt held separate demonstrations to protest arrival of Ocalan to Turkey. Meanwhile, hundreds of people staged separate protest marches in Mardin's Kiziltepe and Nusaybin districts. Police intervened in Nusaybin with armored vehicles and people responded with Molotov cocktails and stones.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Government and main opposition party has remained indifferent to calls issued by PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan (see press summary 02/07), said the daily. Ocalan reportedly said early in the week that he would order PKK militants to lay down arms should the government concede the cultural rights of the Kurds while at the same time protecting these rights in the constitution, and issue a general amnesty for the militants.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Italian attorneys of Abdullah Ocalan made a call to the EU and the Italian government to take action reportedly because the health condition of their client could be grave. The attorneys demanded that an independent delegation of doctors go to Imrali Prison and check the health condition of Ocalan.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Abdulaziz Yilmaz was allegedly kidnapped with his friend Omer Kisak by JITEM (Jandarma Intelligence Center) members (see press summary 01/30) in the Usak province as they were traveling from Adana to Izmir two weeks ago. Kisak was reportedly able to flee from the kidnappers. The daily reported that the alleged dead body of Yilmaz was found nearby a farm where two people were reportedly brought when they were kidnapped. Since the dead person's head, arms and legs were dissected from the body and were not found, DNA samples will reportedly prove the identity of the remaining torso of the body.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Heavy rain, which started pouring yesterday and has continued to fall intermittently till today, caused flooding in Diyarbakir and 172 houses and businesses have been swamped. Roofs of three houses have collapsed and great material damage was done. Municipality workers are striving to provide relief efforts, said the Acting Mayor Ilhan Diken, and cautioned people that the downpour may continue for about two more days.

OZGUR GUNDEM: A 21 year-old male in Batman jumped from one of the hills of Hasankeyf district and committed suicide.

RADIKAL / CUMHURİYET / ZAMAN / OZGUR GUNDEM: Police conducted

a raid on a house in Sirnak's Cizre district and reportedly found buried remains of people whom terrorist organization Hezbollah allegedly kidnapped and executed between 1993 and 1996. In the same house, Hezbollah's ammunition storage was discovered in 2000, and, Abdullah Gul, owner of the estate and the person responsible from the military wing of the Hezbollah was arrested and jailed then. Gul was released two years ago when he applied for benefits from the Repentance Law which took effect during the AKP's rule.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Reyhanli Jandarma Command members caught a person red-handed as he was trying to cross the border illegally at the Yenisehir border area in Hatay's Reyhanli district. He was attempting to smuggle 700 boxes of cigarettes.

ZAMAN: Efforts of the government to make up for the grave shortage of doctors, and the Health Ministry's 8,000 YTL salary offer to attract doctors to the southeastern region of Turkey have reportedly been proving futile.

ZAMAN: Turkish parliamentary commission for probing the Semdinli case has not been able to finish its report concerning the incident despite the passage of three months since the incident. CHP members of the commission have already decided to provide annotations on the controversial report on grounds that the report is denigrating the state.

RADIKAL: A percussion time bomb planted on a street near a bank in Mardin's Kiziltepe district exploded at 10 p.m. yesterday. Bomb squad teams started investigating the scene following the explosion. No casualties were reported following the event.

RADIKAL: First hearing of the court action brought against 34 people on charges of attending the funeral of a PKK terrorist who was killed in the rural sections of Batman's Besiri district was held yesterday. Former DEHAP administrators and municipality council members are among the defendants in the case who are facing 2 years of prison sentences should they be convicted of the charges of "organizing the funeral march, chanting slogans, praising the criminal actions as well as the criminals."

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